



City of Columbus, Ohio

Hiring & Selection

Guide

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During the past several years, numerous changes have been made to the employee selection process. Some of these changes were to provide the departments needed flexibility to recruit and hire high quality employees. Other changes were designed to make the application process less burdensome. Still other changes were designed to reduce department paperwork. The list of these changes includes: at vacancy testing, continuous recruiting, elimination of various forms, the use of banding in lieu of the Rule of Three, the opening of the on-site testing center, the Commission website, and so forth. Despite all these changes, in 2000 when the City asked an outside consulting group to review the City's selection process, many City employees responded that it took forever to hire someone and that the process was confusing. The consulting group pointed out that for every City department there was a different procedure being used to hire employees. Following this review, a City Design Team was created to address these issues.

The first conclusion the Design Team reached was that the previous changes to the hiring procedure were internal to the Civil Service Commission. To address the issues presented by the report, the Team needed to look at the process from beginning to end, inside each department as well as the Commission. With this citywide, rather than Commission only focus, the Design Team identified its goals. These goals were: 1) to initiate a hiring process, which was the same for every City department, 2) to simplify the hiring process, and 3) to use technology as a vehicle for change. These goals would have the end result of making the process more timely and less confusing.

The Design Team developed a new system, which eliminated unnecessary approvals and reduced the number of forms. The new system uses only three forms and the same three forms are used to fill any position. One of the forms is captured electronically using the Commission's electronic position control system which was enhanced to evolve with the new system.

As the new citywide hiring procedure began to develop, the benefits that would be reaped from the new system became clear. Because each department would use the same procedure and forms, there would be no additional training needed when employees transferred across departments. Because the number of forms was reduced and the same forms are used regardless of the position being filled, confusion regarding which form to use will be eliminated. The elimination of unnecessary approvals will cut the time required to hire someone. Finally, the use of the Commission's position control system to record vacancies being filled will mean that the City will have a vacancy database, so anyone could determine which City jobs are actively being filled at any point in time. This database will also allow the City to measure exactly how long it does take to fill each position. This information may be useful in the future to make other changes to the system.

This Hiring Guide is the joint product of the Civil Service Commission and the Human Resources Department. It incorporates the new selection procedure the City will be using. Additionally, it sets forth "best practices" for supervisors and managers to use when filling City vacancies.

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There are three basic steps to hiring a new employee and the new selection system has three forms, one relating to each of these steps. Step one is to get approval to fill a vacancy. Step 2 is to recruit candidates and conduct interviews. Step 3 is to hire the selected applicant.

Step 1: Approval To Fill A Vacancy

Identifying a vacancy: The determination of whether there is a need to fill a vacancy legally and ultimately rests with the appointing authority for each City agency. In most cases, the appointing authority is a Department Director. The Director is responsible for the overall management of the department and must operate the department within certain legal constraints. Each year, City Council sets the budget for the departments and passes the ordinance authorizing a maximum number of employees. Throughout the year, the Director must make decisions consistent with those constraints, as well as taking into account other circumstances which change throughout the year. Pursuant to City Charter, it is only the appointing authority, who has the legal authority to hire employees and as such it is the appointing authority who must approve if a vacancy is to be filled at all.

The immediate supervisor, however, is the City employee who is usually first aware of a vacancy, who best knows the actual work which needs to be performed, and most closely understands the need to fill a particular position. As such, it is the supervisor who initiates the process to fill a vacancy. About 85% of the time, this involves a current employee leaving a position and then simply being replaced by someone performing the same work. The other 15% of the time, either the department's authorized strength has been increased or an already existing position within the department is being put to a different use (e.g., instead of replacing a secretary who resigned, that vacancy is used to hire a new equipment operator).

In any of these three circumstances which can arise, the input of the hiring supervisor is critical. For this reason, the hiring supervisor is the person identified to complete the ***Position Request*** form. This is the form which begins the process to consider a request to fill any City vacancy. The form lists basic information about the vacancy which needs filled, duties to be performed, equipment operated, etc. This form is then sent to the department/division human resources section which will review it for accuracy, completeness, and conformance with the division's overall hiring goals and objectives, and then forward it to the appointing authority for approval. When the appointing authority approves this form, the Civil Service Commission is notified electronically that the appointing authority has approved the vacancy and that the Commission can begin the steps needed to fill it.

Role of the Civil Service Commission: The Civil Service Commission is given the responsibility to ensure that our City job class plan is standardized. This means that when the City hires a new Worker II in one department, that employee is performing work of a similar nature and responsibility level as the other Worker II's already employed by the City. If it turns out that the new employee is supervising other Worker II's, then he should have been hired as a Worker Supervisor. To correct the situation, the department either needs to take the supervisory duties away from the employee or it needs to change the position to a Worker Supervisor and fill it accordingly. The correct job class must be assigned to the position so that the employee receives the correct pay to which he or she is entitled.

Whenever a position is to be filled, the Commission reviews the duties of the vacant position **before** the department fills it. This is to ensure that there is not a misclassification from the very start. Sometimes positions change and evolve as the departments change. So, it is always important to have a review of the current job duties before the department fills the positions. It can avoid many

problems later. The Commission does not approve or disapprove whether to fill a vacancy. The Commission's primary role is to look at the duties to be performed in the position and make a determination as to which of the City's 600 job classes should be assigned to those duties.

Additionally, the Commission helps to ensure that the department does not exceed its authorized strength. The electronic position control system maintains a position for each position authorized by City Council. If a department would transmit a request to create a new position when the department is already at full strength, the request will not be processed.

Step 2: Recruit Candidates and Conduct Interviews

Once the Commission has reviewed and approved the classification to be used to fill the vacancy, the department/division human resources section is notified electronically of the approval. In some cases, union postings for transfers are required and these may occur simultaneously with filling the vacancy. It is the responsibility of the HR professional to confer with the supervisor, and possibly others, regarding how the department wants to proceed to fill the vacancy. The HR professional will then complete the second form, a ***Recruitment Request*** form, to notify the Commission of this information.

How the Commission responds will depend upon what the department requested and the type of vacancy to be filled. In some cases, the Commission might conduct testing. In other cases, the Commission might send back the names of eligibles who have already been screened and are waiting to be interviewed. In still other cases, the Commission might send notices to applicants to submit information to the department. In any event, the next step

will be for the department to review the applicants, conduct interviews and make a selection.

Step 3: Hire The Selected Applicant

Once interviews are completed, and a tentative candidate is selected there are still a few steps to complete. References should be checked, a background review conducted, and a drug screen must be completed for new employees. The final form which, must be completed by the department/division human resources section and the prospective employee is the PP20. This is the legal document which actually makes someone a City employee. Until the appointing authority, or an authorized designee, signs the PP20, the employee has not yet been hired by the City of Columbus.

In short, the new employee selection means that every City agency will use the same procedure and the same three forms to hire any employee. The appointing authority (or an authorized designee) must approve the request to fill the vacancy and sign the form which actually hires the new employee.

In the following sections, step-by-step instructions and detailed explanations have been provided for each of the critical components of the selection process to aid you in filling your vacancies.

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If you take a minute and think back on some of your first experiences as a supervisor or manager, undoubtedly one of the first few challenges you faced involved filling a vacancy. While dealing with all that comes with a new employee can seem overwhelming at times (training, frequent reviews, one-on-one instruction, etc.), having to fill a position can be an excellent opportunity to identify and implement changes that will make the position more valuable and useful to your organization. The City's team of human resources professionals have worked hard to develop a selection process that will enable you to fill your positions efficiently, resulting in minimal disruption to your work group.

So what's the first step in getting your vacancy filled? Well, that first step, although critical, is really very simple. Once you have been made aware of a vacancy within your work group, you will need to contact your department/division human resources section to ensure filling the vacancy is part of the division's overall hiring plan. If so, you will then need to complete a **Position Request** form. A copy of the form has been included in the appendices of this guide, or you can get a copy from your divisional HR office, or at the Commission's website, www.csc.columbus.gov under the Commission Info/Forms buttons. This form will be used to craft a detailed description of the duties and responsibilities of the soon-to-be-filled position.

Before covering the "how-to's" of the form, let's consider for a moment the benefits of a good position description. The duties and responsibilities identified on a **Position Request** form will be the primary factors used to determine which current Commission job classification best covers the work identified for the position. Consequently, great care should be taken when providing this information to ensure it is accurate and truly reflective of the work for which the position will be responsible. Ultimately, the job classification to which the position will be assigned will determine the pay, the

minimum qualifications, and the probationary period requirements to which the new or promoted employee will be subjected.

Besides helping to identify the appropriate job classification for the position at hand, a good position description can be used as a recruiting tool in advertising/posting vacancies, a means by which the expectations of the positions can be communicated to the applicant/employee, and a source for developing position-specific performance standards. It becomes evident pretty quickly that the information included on the ***Position Request*** form will not only be crucial to the initial selection process but also to the overall management of the position. Let's look at the form.

As you will see below, the first section of the form requires that you provide your department and division name and an indication as to whether you are filling a position or just updating the duties associated with a current, filled position you have.



Position Request

Department: _____ Division: _____

This request is to:

- ☐ **FILL** a position.
- ☐ **UPDATE** position duties.

Most of the time, you will be checking the "FILL a position" box. However, when the duties and responsibilities associated with a position do change significantly, yet the position will remain occupied by the current employee, it will be important to update the position information for use by your divisional

HR office and the Commission. In these particular instances, you will be checking the "UPDATE position duties" box and providing the current position information.

The next section of the form asks for a general statement, usually no more than a sentence or two, indicating the position's primary purpose and reason for existence.

What will the major responsibility of this position be?

The third, and probably most critical, section of the form is where the primary duties and their associated percentages are listed. As noted earlier, this information will be crucial in identifying to which job classification the position will be assigned (or allocated).

List the primary duties the position will perform and the associated percentage of time performing the duty:

% Duty Description:

—	—
—	—
—	—
—	—
—	—
—	—
—	—

As you begin to develop the duty statements, the following suggestions will prove helpful as you work:

1. **Be factual** – don't overstate or understate the responsibilities to be assigned to the position. Describe the duties exactly as they are or will be performed.
2. **Keep it simple** – a good position description does not have to be "wordy" to be good. Just make sure it clearly states what the responsibilities are for the position.
3. **Strive for a balanced description** – be as concise as possible but as long as necessary.
4. **Start each statement with a "function" verb** – starting each duty description with a function or action verbs such as "writes," "develops," and "climbs" helps to clearly communicate what is to be done.
5. **Avoid citing specific regulations, form numbers, report names** – using proper names and/or references to specific report or form numbers, etc. often result in the position description becoming quickly outdated when changes to the referenced items occur.
6. **Define acronyms or other technical jargon** – duty descriptions should be free of undefined acronyms or other technical jargon so that someone unfamiliar with the position could read the position description and have a basic understanding of the work to be performed.
7. **Do not copy the class specification** – as a general rule of thumb, a copy of the class specification should not be substituted for an individual position description. In most cases the class specification is very broad in its make-up, covering many positions over multiple departments. Therefore it would not typically have the specificity necessary for accurate completion of the position description.

The next section is a series of questions regarding supervision, equipment operated, etc.

What is the name and classification of the immediate supervisor of this position?: _____

What is the name and classification of the second level supervisor?: _____

What is the number of employees supervised by this position?: _____

What are the names or position numbers and classification titles of the employee(s) to be supervised by this position?: _____

What, if any, license/certification is required/preferred to perform the duties of this position?: _____

Is this license/certification required by the class specification? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What equipment will be regularly **OPERATED, MAINTAINED, and/or REPAIRED** by this position?: _____

What software will be regularly used by this position?: _____

These answers, too, are important to ensuring a complete and accurate “picture” of the position is provided in order to make the final job classification assignment.

Finally, you are asked to sign-off indicating you have provided the information and it is an accurate reflection of the position in question.

I certify that the information contained above is an accurate statement of the major duties and responsibilities of this position. This certification is made with the knowledge that this information will be used to determine the appropriate classification and pay for the position and any false or misleading statements may constitute a violation of City Code.

Originator's Signature

Date

Extension

Please forward this notification to your department/divisional human resources representative for processing.

For some positions (e.g., unbudgeted positions being newly created), your department may want further explanation as to why the position is necessary, its funding source, and so on. For these positions, space has been provided on the back of the ***Position Request*** form for inclusion of any additional pertinent information for review and approval by your department.

Once you have completed and signed the front side and provided the information required by your department on the back side, forward the completed form to your department/division human resources section and then you are done - you have completed the first step in getting your vacancy filled!

Once your human resources office has reviewed your submission, it will be forwarded to your appointing authority for review and approval, and then submitted to the Civil Service Commission for final review and allocation of the position. Once properly allocated, your divisional human resources office can begin to recruit eligible candidates for your review.

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Once a position request has resulted in an approved position allocation by the Civil Service Commission, divisional human resources staff are able to begin the recruitment process for a vacancy. This important step can be initiated by the completion and submission to the Civil Service Commission of a single form, the ***Recruitment Request*** form. As with the ***Position Request*** form discussed in Section 1, a copy of the form has been included in the appendices of this guide, or you can download a copy from the Commission's website, www.csc.columbus.gov under the Commission Info/Forms buttons. This form will be used to notify the Commission of the need to proceed with the next step for filling the vacancy.

It is important to note from the beginning that the ***Recruitment Request*** form has been designed to replace four (4) different forms currently used in the selection process: *Position Availability Notification (PAN)*; *Application Review Request (ARR)*; *Competitive/Qualifying Non-Competitive Certification Request*; *At-Vacancy Exam Request*. Now, those individuals responsible for initiating the recruitment phase of the selection process can do so with this single form.

In reviewing the first section of the form below, you will note that the basic information regarding the position is requested:



Columbus Civil Service Commission
50 West Gay Street, Room 600
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Recruitment Request

Date Notification Prepared: _____
Department: _____ Division: _____
Class Code _____ Class Title: _____
EPC Number(s): _____ Position(s) Type: ☐ FT ☐ PT / ☐ R ☐ L ☐ S Shift: ☐ 1st ☐ 2nd ☐ 3rd

The next section is to be used only in instances where a department has identified a current departmental employee to fill the noncompetitive or provisional position and no Civil Service Commission posting will be requested. It is important to note here that the minimum qualifications review and approval must be completed by the Civil Service Commission before an offer of employment can be made to the candidate.

Complete this section **ONLY** if a current employee from your department has been identified to fill this noncompetitive or provisional vacancy, and no CSC posting is being requested. A completed application must be submitted with this notification, and approved by the Civil Service Commission **BEFORE** an offer of employment can be made to the identified candidate.

1. Employee Name: _____
2. Social Security Number: _____
3. Current Classification: _____

Between Sections Two and Three of the ***Recruitment Request***, Section Three will be the portion you will use most often when completing this form. This section contains several important options for initiating the recruitment process.

If the position you are filling is for a competitive classification but no list currently exists or those on the current list do not have the specific skills and/or experience required for your position, you may be able to request an at vacancy exam. The Commission maintains approximately 200 at-vacancy exams, ready for administering upon the request of a department. (A complete listing of available exams can be obtained by contacting the Commission's Testing Resource Unit.)

☐ **Please ADMINISTER an AT-VACANCY exam for this position and issue a certification list:**

1. ☐ Open Competitive ☐ Promotional ☐ Rule VI (Name/SSN): _____

(forward completed application with this request form)
2. Reason for test: _____ MQ's ☐ Approved ☐ Rejected by: _____

☐ Eligible list has fewer than 5 names available ☐ List due to expire ☐ Other: _____
3. ☐ Special information to include in posting: _____

When initiating an at-vacancy exam, be sure to include all of the information requested so that your request can be processed quickly and accurately.

Your next option under Section Three allows you to request a posting for any noncompetitive position or competitive position for which an exam does not currently exist.

☐ **Please POST this position:**

1. Opening Date: _____ Closing Date: _____
3. Individual to receive ARF's: _____ Phone: (614) 645 - _____
4. Mailing Address: _____

5. Special information to be included in the Vacancy Notification:

Remember to provide any special skills or work experiences you would like to be included in the posting notice in order to help focus the recruiting effort.

If your vacancy is for a competitive or qualifying noncompetitive classification for which a current eligible list exists, you will need to request and use the certification list provided by the Civil Service Commission in order to fill your vacancy. The individuals on these lists have met or exceeded the minimum qualifications for the classification and have successfully passed the examination administered covering key knowledge, skills, and abilities critical to the job.

☐ **Please ISSUE a competitive/qualifying noncompetitive certification list.**

Comments: _____
Contact: _____ Phone: (614) 645 - _____

Your final option under this section enables you to use this form to forward applications for minimum qualification review by the Civil Service Commission staff. Ideally, a copy of the original recruitment request used to initiate a posting will be used to forward the applications submitted as a result of the posting.

☐ **Please REVIEW the attached () application(s) and issue a noncompetitive certification list or provisional hiring approval.**

Once the appropriate selection has been made and information provided, an authorizing signature and submission to the Civil Service Commission will start the recruitment process, resulting in a listing of qualified candidates from which you may begin the interviewing process.

Authorizing Signature

Date

Extension

On the back of the Recruitment Request form (see next page), space has been provided for the department/division human resources section to summarize the selection process for the top five candidates for the vacancy being filled. Ideally, a copy of this form, both front and back, will be included with the certification list forwarded to the appointing authority for final selection.

Selection Process Summary

Interview Panel Members:

<u>Panel #1</u>	<u>Panel #2</u>
Name:	Name:
Classification:	Classification:

Candidate Summary:

Final Candidate:	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
Last Name:					
First Name:					
1 st Interview Date:					
2 nd Interview Date:					
Current Position Title:					
Current Employer:					
Current Pay Rate:					
BICF info rec'd. from CSC?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Overall Reference Rating:	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Verified only	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Verified only	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Verified only	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Verified only	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Verified only
Overall rating by Panel #1:	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
Overall rating by Panel #2:	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
Relatives?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Authorizing Signature:					
THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE TO BE COMPLETED FOLLOWING THE APPOINTING AUTHORITY'S FINAL SELECTION					
Conditional Offer Date:					
Drug Screen Date:					
Drug Screen OK?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
CSC Interview Date:					
Appointment Effective Date:					
Starting Pay Rate:					

Comments Regarding Candidate:

Candidate 1: _____

Candidate 2: _____

Candidate 3: _____

Candidate 4: _____

Candidate 5: _____

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Certainly, all of the steps associated with the hiring process are important. But if you were to identify the “most important” of the “important,” there is little doubt the interview preparation step would be very close to, if not at, the top of the list since it will provide the foundation for your interaction with and evaluation of the eligible candidates for your vacancy.

In Section Five, you will find several checklists and sample documents (as noted below) that should be used in preparation for the interviewing of candidates. Questions regarding this information can be directed to your department/division human resources section.

- Interviewer’s Master Checklist
- Developing Job-Related Criteria
- Developing Job-Related Questions
- Guide To Interview Questions
- Creating The Interview Schedule
- Selecting The Interview Panel
- Sample Interview Panel Confirmation Letter
- Panel Member’s Code
- Contacting The Candidates
- Sample Candidate’s Confirmation Letter

Filling A Vacancy: Master Checklist

- ☐ Contact your human resources section and meet to review the hiring process requirements.
- ☐ Develop job-related criteria based upon the information identified in the Position Request document previously completed for the vacancy.
- ☐ Develop job-related questions which cover specific skills/aptitudes, work experience, and customer service/interpersonal skills.
- ☐ Receive eligible list and review applications and/or resumes.
- ☐ Review and finalize interview questions and the names of candidates to be interviewed with your human resources contact; create interview schedule.
- ☐ Select interview panel.
- ☐ Send confirmation letters and panel members' code to the interview panel members. Include the date, time, location, parking information, and directions.
- ☐ Contact the candidates and mail confirmation letter. Schedule the candidates for interview. Ask them to bring three references and their last two performance appraisals. Give directions to the interview location, and a telephone number to call in the event that they have to cancel. (If a candidate indicates they have a special need in order to participate in the interview process, contact your department/division human resources section for further instructions on how to proceed.)

- ☐ Conduct Interviews. Your human resources section should monitor the panel and intervene if anything inappropriate occurs (asking illegal questions, etc.).
- ☐ If needed, conduct second interviews. It is recommended that the panel consist of the hiring supervisor, and supervisors in the chain of command. Notify top candidates and conduct second interviews. If internal candidates are not among the finalists, contact them in person before second interviews are held.
- ☐ Review final recommendation with the human resources section. Send “thank you” memos/notes to interview panel members and candidates interviewed.
- ☐ Return applications, eligible lists/notes, and all interview materials to the human resources section.

DEVELOPING JOB-RELATED CRITERIA

Before reviewing applications, determine the criteria by which candidates will be considered for an interview. For example...

- General work history – for example, two years as a customer service representative, five years as a trainer, etc.
- Training or Education – school, college, or training courses, apprenticeships, business, human resources, computer.
- Specific Experience – word processing, Word 6.0, typing skills of 40 wpm, etc.
- Unique Skills – supervisory, computer, training, customer service, etc.
- Test Score – minor distinctions in scores should not be considered significant. In general, however, candidates with high scores have demonstrated a higher level of knowledge or skill than candidates with significantly lower scores.

DEVELOPING JOB-RELATED QUESTIONS

When writing interview questions, consider the following:

- Essential functions/duties of the job.
- For an existing position, what went well before? What problems were encountered?
- For a new position, what do you want to achieve? What challenges will the position face?
- Needs of the work unit and department.

Use your questions effectively and gather meaningful information by phrasing them carefully. Make your questions short, understandable and try to keep the wording appropriate to the level of the job.

Interview questions must be kept confidential and should only be reviewed by the panel members on the day of the interview. As the individual overseeing the panel and its work, it is your responsibility to safeguard the questions and panel notes. Give these materials to your human resources section after the interview.

Types Of Interview Questions That May Be Asked

<u>Type</u>	<u>Example</u>	<u>Advantage/Disadvantage</u>
1. Closed Question: Used to gain specific information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where did you get your degree?• In what did you major?• Where did you receive your training?• When did you first act as supervisor?• What was your supervisor's name and title?• To whom did your supervisor report?	<p>Advantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is easy to understand.• Usually brings a concise answer.• Produces specific information.• Many direct questions can be asked and answered in a short time. <p>Disadvantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Restricts the candidate's answer to the question asked.• Sometimes it appears abrupt to the candidate.
2. Open Question: requires more than a simple answer. Candidate selects material to be included in answer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell us about your experience with your former employer.• What are your career goals?	<p>Advantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It often brings out unexpected and valuable material not obtained in other ways.• It indicates how well the

Types Of Interview Questions That May Be Asked

<u>Type</u>	<u>Example</u>	<u>Advantage/Disadvantage</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does this job relate to your goals? How did that change affect your job? What do you think your qualifications are for this position? 	<p>Advantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> candidates can organize their thoughts. It sometimes reveals attitudes and feelings. <p>Disadvantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The answer is sometimes trivial and sketchy. Answers are sometimes rambling. Some candidates go into too much detail. Answers are time-consuming.
3. Leading question: Can be answered with a “yes” or “no” or may suggest an answer. Used to verify information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You majored in business? You were a supervisor at that time? This job requires use of a forklift. You’ve used one before, haven’t you? 	<p>Advantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is particularly useful to start off an interview to verify statements on the application. Quickly clears up doubtful points. <p>Disadvantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May suggest the desired answer. Seldom furnishes clues for further development of a situation. Requires very little input from the candidate.
4. Situational or “Hypothetical” question: Usually involves a critical situation or incident developed through job analysis. Often begins with “What do you think you would do if...”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you were a clerk at the front counter and a citizen began to yell at you, what would you do? If you were a supervisor and one of your staff kept failing to call in when he or she was sick, what would you do? 	<p>Advantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires a candidate to analyze a situation. May show limitations of a candidate’s experience. May show the candidate’s appreciation of the ethics or practice of an occupation. <p>Disadvantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doesn’t indicate whether candidates would really do what they say they would. Usually requires a lot of time to answer fully.
5. Behavioral or “Experience-Related” question: A variation of the hypothetical question which asks the same question from a more personal point of view.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please describe a situation where you had to calm or subdue a customer who was upset. What action did you take? 	<p>Advantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidates may be more apt to tell you how they really handled similar situations rather than providing a “textbook” answer. Past experience tends to be indicative of future behavior. <p>Disadvantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidate may be unable to recall a situation or has never

Types Of Interview Questions That May Be Asked

<u>Type</u>	<u>Example</u>	<u>Advantage/Disadvantage</u>
		had a similar experience to relate.
6. Clarifying question: used to get more information about a statement the candidate makes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please tell us more about the training you just mentioned. 	<p>Advantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives opportunity to get more details about an answer. Helps prevent assumptions. <p>Disadvantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases time for interview.

Questions to Avoid

Supervisors often ask what is acceptable and what is unacceptable to ask in any pre-employment interview. The information desired is often “acceptable,” but some methods of obtaining the information may be “unacceptable.” Some questions may be acceptable for some jobs but not for others. While specific questions may or may not be acceptable in and of themselves, you should be aware that certain areas of questioning are often the subject of discrimination charges and complaints. These areas are incorporated into a number of laws and regulations:

- Title VII of the Federal Civil Rights Acts of 1964
- The Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972
- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- The Privacy Act (1974)
- The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986





















- The Age Discrimination in Employment Act
- Americans with Disabilities Act (1990)
- Civil Rights Act of 1991
- Regulations of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Department of Labor (DOL), Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Revenue Sharing (ORS), and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM)
- Sexual Orientation
- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Sexual Harassment

All of these have a common objective – to prohibit unfair discrimination in employment based on race, religion, color, national origin or ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability. The only legally acceptable reason to reject a person is for the inability to perform the essential functions of the position. No other reason for rejection (including the preferences of co-workers or the public) is acceptable.




















There is other information that would be unacceptable at the pre-employment stage, but would be acceptable to require after the job offer has been made. The “Interviewer’s Guide to Interview questions” follows to assist interviewers with these issues.

If you are interviewing a candidate with a visible disability, do not ask any question that you would not ask other candidates. **Do not ask questions about or initiate discussion about the disability unless the issue is raised by the applicant.** If a disabled candidate raises the issue of reasonable accommodation, the selection panel chairperson should explain that the purpose of the selection interview is to evaluate each applicant’s ability to perform the functions of the position. Reasonable accommodation is considered and decided as part of the final selection.

Guide To Interview Questions

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Acceptable</u> <u>(if related to the position)</u>	<u>Unacceptable</u>
Race or Color	 None	 Candidates race. Color of candidate's skin, eyes, hair, etc., or other questions directly or indirectly indicating race or color.
National Origin	 Languages candidate reads, speaks, or writes fluently – only if position requires use of foreign language.	 Candidate's nationality, lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent or parentage.  Date of arrival in U.S. or port of entry; how long a resident.  Language commonly used by candidate.  Nationality of candidate's parents or spouse; maiden name of candidate's wife or mother.  How candidate acquired ability to read, write, or speak a foreign language.  Requirement of candidate's photograph.
Citizenship	 Statement by employer that, if hired, candidate may be required to submit proof of citizenship.	 "Are you a U.S. citizen?"  Whether candidate or his/her spouse or parents are naturalized or native-born U.S. citizens.  Date when candidate or parents or spouse acquired U.S. citizenship.  Requirement that candidate produce naturalization papers.  Whether candidate's spouse or parents are citizens of the U.S.  Birthplace of candidate / candidate's parents / spouse or other relatives.  Requirement that candidate submit a birth certificate, naturalization or baptismal record.
Relatives	 Names of candidate's relatives already employed by the City (see A.R. 2.91)	 Name or address of any relative of adult candidate.  Spouse's work.
























Guide To Interview Questions

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Acceptable</u> <u>(if related to the position)</u>	<u>Unacceptable</u>
	 Name and address of parent or guardian if candidate is a minor.	
Notification in Case of Emergency	 Name and address of person to be notified in case of accident or emergency (after selection).	 Name and address of relative to be notified in case of accident or emergency.
Organizations	 Job or profession-related organizations, clubs, professional societies or other associations of which candidate is a member, excluding any names which indicates the race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry of its members.	 The names of organizations which would indicate the race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin or ancestry of membership.
Religion	 None	 Candidate's religious denomination or affiliation, church, parish, pastor or religious holidays observed.
Work Days and Shifts	 Statement by employer of regular days, hours, or shifts to be worked.	 Availability question which is not part of job requirement.
Sex	 None	 Any inquiry which would indicate that being a person of a particular sex is a requirement for the job or a factor in determining whether or not the person will be satisfied in a particular job.  Inquiries related to pregnancy; inquiries indicating women in general may be less physically able to perform manual aspects.  Any question regarding the applicant's sexual orientation.
Name	 "Have you ever worked anywhere under a different name?" (for purpose of conducting a reference check)  "Have you ever been convicted of a crime under another name?"	 Former name of candidate whose name has been changed by court order or otherwise.  Maiden name.  Prior married name.  Any inquiry which would indicate a person's lineage, ancestry, national origin or descent.

Guide To Interview Questions

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Acceptable</u> <u>(if related to the position)</u>	<u>Unacceptable</u>
Marital and Family Status	<p>👍 Whether candidate can meet specified work schedules or has activities, commitments or responsibilities that may hinder the meeting of work attendance requirements.</p>	<p>👎 Any inquiries indicating whether a candidate is married, single, divorced, engaged, etc. Number and age of children. Questions concerning pregnancy.</p> <p>👎 Child care arrangements.</p>
Physical Condition	<p>👍 Questions related specifically to the essential functions of the position and a candidate's ability to perform them.</p>	<p>👎 Reference to applicant's disability, unless raised by the applicant.</p>
Age	<p>👍 "Are you over 18 years of age?" (Firefighter recruit)</p> <p>👍 "Are you over 20 years of age?" (Police recruit)</p>	<p>👎 Questions which tend to identify candidates over 40 years of age.</p> <p>👎 Requiring candidates to produce proof of age.</p> <p>👎 Date last attended high school.</p>
Disabilities	<p>👍 "Would you be able to perform the functions of the job?"</p> <p>👍 Statement by employer that offer of employment may be made contingent on passing a physical exam.</p>	<p>👎 "Do you have any physical disabilities?"</p> <p>👎 Questions on general medical condition.</p> <p>👎 Inquiries as to receipt of Worker's Compensation.</p> <p>👎 Inquiries as to the nature or severity of any apparent disability.</p> <p>👎 Any follow-up question to information volunteered by the candidate describing a disability.</p>
Education	<p>👍 Candidate's academic, vocational, or professional education; schools attended.</p>	<p>👎 Inquiry asking specifically the nationality, racial composition, or religion of a school.</p> <p>👎 Requiring educational qualifications which may not relate to successful job performance.</p>
Drug Use	<p>👍 Questions regarding convictions for offenses involving the use, possession, or sale of illegal drugs.</p>	<p>👎 Questions regarding the extent or nature of any illegal drug use, or whether the candidate has been addicted to an illegal drug.</p> <p>👎 Questions about the</p>

Guide To Interview Questions

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Acceptable (if related to the position)</u>	<u>Unacceptable</u>
Experience	<p> Candidate's work experience.</p> <p> Candidate's military experience in armed forces of the U.S., in state militia (U.S.) or in a particular branch of the U.S. armed forces.</p>	<p>frequency or quantity of alcohol consumption, or whether the candidate is an alcoholic.</p> <p> Candidate's general military experience, which would indicate candidate's national origin or ancestry.</p>
Credit Rating, Garnishment Records and Assets	<p> If position requires bonding, these issues may be addressed after the preliminary hiring decision has been made.</p>	<p> Any questions concerning credit ratings, charge accounts, personal holding, home ownership.</p> <p> Questions regarding wage garnishments.</p>
Conviction and Arrest	<p> "Have you ever been convicted of any crime other than minor traffic violations?" "If so, where, when and disposition of case?" (consider job relatedness in evaluation)</p> <p> Did the candidate include this information on the application form?</p>	<p> Any inquiry relating to arrests.</p>
Transportation	<p> Statement by employer of worksite location, hours, etc.</p> <p> "Are the hours/location cited acceptable?"</p>	<p> "Do you own a car?" (unless the position requires the use of a personal vehicle)</p>
Photograph	<p> Statement that photograph may be required after employment.</p>	<p> Requirement that candidate affix a photograph to the application form or provide one prior to interview.</p>
References	<p> "How did you find out about this job?" (for information only)</p> <p> Names of persons willing to provide professional references.</p>	<p> Requirement of a religious reference.</p> <p> "By whom were you referred?"</p> <p> Political reference.</p>
Driver's License	<p> "Do you have or can you obtain an Ohio driver's license before hire?"</p> <p> Questions relating to driving record (see PD letter 96).</p>	
Miscellaneous	<p> Notice to candidate that any misstatements or omissions</p>	<p> Any inquiry that is not job-related or necessary for</p>

Guide To Interview Questions

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Acceptable</u> <u>(if related to the position)</u>	<u>Unacceptable</u>
	of material facts in the application may be cause for dismissal.	determining a candidate's eligibility for employment.

CREATING THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Once candidates have been selected for invitation to the interview process, it is time to schedule the interview.

Consider the following:

- The interview length may vary depending on the level of the position, and the number of questions to be asked.
- Schedule enough time for candidates to respond thoroughly and ask questions if they have them.
- Build in time between interviews for discussion or breaks for the panel.
- Keep a written record of the interview.

Where to interview:

- Select a quiet, easily accessible private location, such as a conference room.
- Select a room setup that provides a comfortable setting for the candidates as well as the panel members. Conference style is generally less intimidating.
- A staff member should be available to greet and direct candidates.

SAMPLE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

**Administrative Analyst I
Interview Schedule
City Hall, Room 103 Conference Room
June 19, 200X**

Candidates

Start Time	End Time	Candidate
08:30 a.m.	09:15 a.m.	James Smith
09:30 a.m.	10:15 a.m.	Joan Jones
10:30 a.m.	11:15 a.m.	Janice Cox
11:30 a.m.	12:15 p.m.	Paul Gray

LUNCH

Start Time	End Time	Candidate
01:30 p.m.	02:15 p.m.	June Uhlman
02:30 p.m.	3:15 p.m.	Martha Jamison
03:30 p.m.	04:15 p.m.	Cindy Lowe

<u>Panel Members :</u>	Bruce Mueller	Omar Lensky
	Carol Nieman	Bill French (HR observer)

c: Supervisor
 Human Resources Section

SELECTING THE INTERVIEW PANEL

Select three to five members to serve on the interview panel.

The panel should be familiar with the position duties and requirements, and be representative of the applicant pool in both ethnicity and gender. Additionally, the interview panel should include individuals at a higher level than the position being filled. If that is not possible, a panel member at the equivalent level is acceptable. The panel may include:

- The hiring supervisor or delegate. (In some situations, the immediate supervisor may act as an observer. The observer must be in attendance for the duration of each interview.)
- A person from another city department or division who is knowledgeable of the department and/or position.
- The Human Resources Manager or delegate.
- A customer or associate who is knowledgeable of the position. This may include representation from outside city employment.
- An individual outside the chain of command. This will ensure objectivity of the process.
- NOTE: It is a conflict of interest for a family member to sit on a hiring panel involving relatives or individuals with whom the panel member has a close personal relationship. Panel member should declare any such relationships with a candidate to the panel organizer prior to the interviews. A determination can then be made as to the appropriateness of the panel member continuing in the process.

SAMPLE INTERVIEW PANEL CONFIRMATION LETTER

Date

Panel Member Name

Address

City, State, Zip code

Dear _____:

Thank you for agreeing to serve on the interview panel for the (class) position in the (department) on (interview date). The interviews will be held on the _ floor of Columbus City Hall, 90 W. Broad Street, in conference room #_____. Parking is available at and will be validated for the LeVeque Tower parking garage. The interviews start at (time) and should be concluded by (time). Please plan to be here at (time) so that we can go over the questions and procedures to be followed.

Attached is a copy of the **Panel Member's Code** for your review, and a list of candidates. Copies of the candidates' applications will be forwarded to you for review shortly before the interview date(s). If you are related to or have a close personal relationship with any candidate listed, please contact me immediately. Conflict of interest laws prohibit family members from participating in processes involving relatives.

I look forward to seeing you on (date), and thank you in advance, for your participation in this process. I am confident that with your input we will choose the best candidate.

If you have any questions, please call me at (614) 645-XXXX.

Sincerely,

(Your name)

(Title)

Attachment

PANEL MEMBER'S CODE

Ask all applicants the same questions

Clarify answers but do not explore new areas

Stop any discriminatory comments

Panelists must be present for all interviews

Treat all applicants equally

Do not participate in any interview panel which includes any family relatives or individuals with whom you have a close, personal relationship. Immediately declare a conflict of interest to the panel organizer.

CONTACTING THE CANDIDATES

Contact the candidates at least five days prior to the interview to provide details of the interview process. Whether by phone, mail or email, you should:

- Describe the job.
- Give the date, time, and place of the interview.
- Describe the interview process.
- Advise the candidates of the estimated time the entire process will take.
- Ask the candidates to bring past performance reviews and/or references.
- Provide a contact name and phone number.
- Ask: “Do you need any reasonable accommodation for the interview?”

SAMPLE CANDIDATE'S CONFIRMATION LETTER

Date

Candidate's Name
Address
City, State, Zip code

Dear (Candidate):

We are looking forward to interviewing you for the vacant Administrative Analyst I position in the Purchasing Office of the Department of Finance.

Your panel interview is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Monday, June XX, 200X, in Room 103 on the first floor of Columbus City Hall at 90 West Broad Street. The interview should last about 30 minutes. We request that you bring copies of your last two performance evaluations or two letters of reference from your current or former employer.

If you have any questions or if you require reasonable accommodation in the interview process, please call John Brown at 645-XXXX.

Sincerely,

(Your name)
(Title)

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In this section of the guide, you will find several checklists and sample documents (as noted below) that should be used in conducting the interviews. Questions regarding this information can be directed to your department/division human resources section.

- Interview Day Checklist
- Interviewing Tips For Panel Members
- Sample Interview Panel Instructions
- Evaluating The Candidate
- Sample Interview Notes Worksheet
- Sample Panel Member Recommendations Form

Interview Checklist

The DAY BEFORE the interview:

- ☐ Confirm time schedule, room reservations, and participants to be in attendance. Confirm panel members received copies of the applications to review BEFORE interview day.
- ☐ Make sure folders/packets for each panel member are ready including copies of interview questions, applications, interview schedule, interview panel instructions, position description, and any other information you think could be of benefit to the panel.
- ☐ Give a copy of the interview schedule to the staff member who will be directing the candidates once they arrive.
- ☐ Make sure there is a comfortable place for the candidates to wait. Have copies of the job description and/or fact sheet available for their review.

The DAY OF the interview:

- ☐ Make sure the interview room is set-up in a way that is conducive to conversation and not intimidating or overpowering to candidates.
- ☐ Introduce panel members to each other and review Panel Members' Code, position requirements, interview questions, and the Interview Notes Worksheet.
- ☐ Select an interview chair who will introduce the panel, start, and conduct the interviews. Decide who will ask each question. Each panel member should ask the same questions all day.
- ☐ Explain to the panel that it is their responsibility to recommend the top two or three candidates to the hiring authority. The candidates should not be numerically ranked or rated.
- ☐ Greet candidates waiting to interview, answer questions, introduce the panel members and the interview process. Give applicants overview, structure, and time limits of interview.
- ☐ Conduct interviews. On the Interview Notes Worksheet, write down facts during and/or immediately following the interview. Do not rely on your memory.

- ☐ Tell the applicant of the physical demands of the job and ask whether he/she can fulfill those requirements. If the applicant discloses unsolicited information regarding physical limitations, refer to job requirements. “These are the requirements for this job, can you fulfill these requirements?”
- ☐ Be consistent with each candidate, asking the same questions and gathering the same information.
- ☐ Close the interview once questioning is completed. Do not make representations or promises that are inaccurate. Do give the applicant an approximate time line when they will hear from you.
- ☐ Collect all materials from the panel members at the end of the day. Store in a safe place until they can be transferred to the human resource section.

REMEMBER: Don’t underestimate the importance of the interview. It is a process that will help you identify and hire the employees you need, but it is also a process that can be challenged or scrutinized in court.

INTERVIEWING TIPS FOR PANEL MEMBERS

At the interview, the hiring supervisor or panel chairperson should introduce the candidate to the panel. Panel members are encouraged to consider the following as the interviews are conducted:

- Treat all candidates the same: be friendly to all.
- Practice good listening skills.
- Allow the candidates to do most of the talking.
- Use the calculated pause; allow the candidate to take the time to “think.” Silence is okay as long as it does not last too long.
- Do not give away the answers.
- Ask each candidate the same questions; repeat or restate the question if necessary.
- Discourage rambling by explaining the time limit and the number of questions at the beginning of the interview.
- Be attentive and encouraging.
- Watch candidate’s body language, be aware of body language you use.
- Ask follow-up questions to clarify only.

When the interview is over, the candidate should be asked if there is any additional information to present to the panel or any questions for the panel. The candidates should be told what to expect next.

SAMPLE INTERVIEW PANEL INSTRUCTIONS

Department/Division Name

Position Classification Title

Interview Panel Instructions

Interview Dates(s)

Thank you for agreeing to participate as a panel member in the Department of (Name) interviews for a (classification title) position. As an interview panel member, you are being charged with the responsibility of identifying the top candidates to be recommended to (appointing authority name) for a hiring decision. To assist you in this important task, the following general instructions and guidelines are being provided:

- **PANEL CHAIR.** The panel chair is (Name and Title). The chair will coordinate introductions and facilitate the interviews. She/He will be responsible for the opening and closing questions.
- **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.** In the packet is a list of (#) questions divided into (#) categories: (ex. Customer Service, Supervision, Job Knowledge, Interactive Skills). You will be asked to select the questions with which you feel comfortable. Questions may be modified prior to the first interview or a new question may be developed, however, the question must be job related, and must be asked of all candidates. Follow up questions may be asked if they are needed to clarify an answer. No new or unrelated questions may be introduced once interviews are underway.
- **EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION.** Panel members will independently assess the responses of each candidate to the questions asked. You will not be asked to come up with a numerical rating or ranking. You should record your top candidates on the Panel Member Recommendations form. The chair will then facilitate the panel in developing a consensus of the top candidates. It is appropriate to take notes while the candidate is responding. These notes may help in evaluations and final discussions to reach consensus. Department staff will collect the notes at the conclusion of the interview process.
- **MISCELLANEOUS.** The hiring supervisor will be responsible for communicating with the candidates following the interview process. Candidates will be instructed to address any questions about the process, including the interview, to the hiring supervisor. In accordance with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, we do not know who among the candidates may have a disability. If a candidate has a visible disability, please do not initiate any discussion relative to the disability. If the candidate asks about “reasonable accommodation,” advise the candidate that this matter would be discussed after a job offer had been tendered.

Thank you, again, for assisting us in this important selection process.

EVALUATING THE CANDIDATE

Each panel member should evaluate the individual's performance in the interview and make necessary notes or comments.

- Explain the areas where the candidate's performance was less than acceptable. Reasons must relate to behavior that can be described. Be explicit and to the point.
- Evaluate the candidate in terms of responses to structured questions, and the candidate's ability to perform the essential functions of the classification.
- Panel members should come to a consensus of the top candidates. Numerical ranking or rating should be avoided.
- Do not discuss an applicant's disability at this time. Reasonable accommodation is an issue at the time of hire.

The following pages illustrate a sample interview worksheet form and recommendation form.

SAMPLE INTERVIEW NOTES WORKSHEET

Department/Division Name

Position Classification Title

Interview Dates(s)

Interview Notes Worksheet

Panel Member

Name:

CANDIDATE:

Category #1: **Customer Service**

1. (list question)
2. (list question)
3. (list question)

Category #2: **Supervision:**

4. (list question)
5. (etc.)

Candidate's Strengths:

Areas for follow up:

SAMPLE PANEL MEMBER RECOMMENDATION

Interview Dates(s)

Panel Member Recommendations

Panel Member's Name: _____

After the interviews are completed, please individually record the names of the top candidates you believe should be considered further by the hiring supervisor. After you have recorded your recommendations, the panel will discuss the candidates and come to a consensus decision.



The candidates I recommend to the hiring supervisor to be considered further are:

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Often, a good indicator of what you might expect in performance from a new employee is how he/she has performed in the past. Although sometimes difficult to get, direct, honest feedback from a former supervisor/employer regarding an individual's work performance can be invaluable as a final decision is made regarding a selection for your vacancy. Section Seven of the guide provides you with several checklists and sample documents (as noted below) for checking references once the interview process has been completed. Questions regarding this information can be directed to your department/division human resources section.

- Reference Checking Tips
- Sample Authorization To Release Information
- Reference Check Questionnaire

REFERENCE CHECKING

Once the candidate pool has been narrowed to the top two or three candidates, the hiring supervisor or the human resources section should conduct a reference check of each finalist, including previous/current employer(s). Taking advantage of this selection tool may bring to light performance or attendance problems or falsified application information.

Most state laws protect employers who give references in good faith if they provide accurate statements about the candidate's performance on the job. If you call a reference, and the individual is reluctant to provide information without a written waiver form from the candidate, the sample authorization to release information may be used.

In addition to reference checking, personnel files for current City employees are available for review at the division level, or at the Applicant and Employee Services unit of the Civil Service Commission. It is advisable to check these materials before making a final decision to hire.

Reference Checking Tips

- Make a list of topics you wish to ask.
- Ask questions appropriate to the job and source.
- Listen to what is said and not said.
- Keep the conversation going.
- Interpret the data carefully.
- Ask if the employers would rehire the candidate if an opening were available.

5 steps for conducting telephone reference checks

1. Identify yourself
2. Ask prepared, open-ended questions
3. Ask for “spin-off” references
4. Take good notes
5. Thank the reference provider

Categories of questions

- Basic facts
- Job content
- Supervision
- Performance level
- Major skill areas
- Personal traits and abilities affecting the job

SAMPLE AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION



City of Columbus, Ohio
Authorization to Release Information

I, _____, hereby authorize my former employer, _____ to release information regarding my education, training, work experience, qualifications, and job performance to the City of Columbus, Ohio representative identified below. I do hereby agree to release, save, defend, and hold harmless my former employer, as named above, and/or its officers, employees, and agents from claims arising from the release of such employment related information.

Information to be released to:

Candidate Signature

Date

The following sample questions provide a guideline for the type of questions that should be asked during a reference check. This list is not all inclusive and should be modified as needed to meet the specific requirements of the job you are filling. Questions regarding the technical components of the job being filled should also be included as part of the reference check.

Reference Check Questionnaire

“Hello, my name is _____. I am the _____ Supervisor in the _____ Department with the City of Columbus. Bill Jones has applied for the job of _____ with our department/division and has given your name as a reference. I would like to ask you a series of questions regarding Mr. Jones’ performance and qualifications for this position.”

- What position did Mr. Jones occupy when he worked for you? What were his primary job duties?
- How long did Mr. Jones work under your supervision?
- How would you describe his attendance record including unscheduled absences and tardiness?
- Did he use a computer as part of his job duties? If so, what type of software did he use; what type of hardware? What was his error rate when inputting data?
- Was he responsible for answering the telephone? If so, did he provide information to members of the public or internal customers? Were his skills in answering the telephone satisfactory? Did you ever receive complaints about his skills?
- Please describe the interpersonal skills of Mr. Jones with his co-workers/peers, and supervisors.
- How would you describe his customer service skills?

- Please describe his ability to work independently.
- How would you rate his volume of work?
- How would you evaluate his ability to follow directions?
- How would you evaluate his overall accuracy and his attention to detail?
- How would you describe his job strengths? His weaknesses?
- How would you describe his overall quality of work?
- What haven't I asked you that you might be able to tell me about this applicant which would help me better evaluate him for this job?
- If you were in a position to rehire this individual, would you?

Name of person talked to: _____

Title of person talked to: _____

Relationship to candidate: _____

Company/Agency/Department: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Date: _____

Education Verification

Post high school education should be verified IF the education was a major factor in selecting the individual as a finalist. Normally this is done only for the final candidates as part of the reference checking process.

Contact the school's Registrar's Office or Office of Student Records (the most common names used).

- Provide them with the applicant's name (some may ask for social security number), and ask them to verify the education claimed. For example, "Tom Student indicated he received a master's degree in accounting in 1985. Can you confirm this?"

- Generally, schools will not answer the question, “How many credit hours does Tom Student have?”

If you are having difficulty verifying education, discuss the matter with the applicant. Schools deal with a large volume of records, and record keeping errors can happen.

If you believe that a college or university may be a “diploma mill,” you can verify the institution’s accreditation by contacting the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools at (312) 263-0456 if there is a concern.

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Once a final candidate has been identified as a result of the interview process, the divisional human resources section is responsible for arranging for the final steps of the hiring process. For most positions being filled, returning a completed and signed certification list to the Civil Service Commission will be the next step in the hiring process. Commission staff will then review the certification list to ensure the selection was made in accordance with current rules, policies, and procedures.

Following the return of the certification list, the Commission will await background information for the candidate(s) from the Division of Police. Once the Commission receives this information, the hiring department/division will be notified of the review results and is then able to make a final determination as to whether or not they want to proceed with the hire. Only after the background information has been received and considered by the department/division should a conditional offer of employment be made to the preferred candidate(s).

Conditional offers of employment, once made to and accepted by a candidate, are contingent upon the candidate's successful completion of an illegal substance screening. Typically, this screening procedure must be completed by the candidate within (24) to (48) hours of acceptance of the conditional offer of employment. (Current information on the screening vendor and the related procedures are included in the appendices of this guide.) Upon notification of the candidate's successful completion of the substance screening, a final ***pre-employment review*** can be scheduled for the candidate with Commission staff. This review should typically occur no later than (48) hours prior to the intended start date for the candidate.

For the pre-employment review, a candidate should be instructed to bring along 1.) a current driver's license, and 2.) an original social security card or an original/certified birth certificate in order to demonstrate compliance with

the Immigration Reform & Control Act of 1986 requirements. A passport (current or expired) will also work should the driver's license, social security card, or birth certificate not be readily available. These articles will be reviewed and copied for inclusion with the I-9 paperwork the candidate will complete during the pre-employment review.

In addition to the "eligible to work" documents identified above, candidates should bring with them, if it has not already been forwarded to the Commission prior to the pre-employment review, the original PP01/PP20 paperwork (long form for NEW hires and short form for current employees changing positions), fully executed by the appointing authority. Commission staff must have this document available in order to complete the pre-employment review.

During the review, Commission staff will cover with the candidate specifics regarding the City's residency requirement, the appointment type and probationary period associated with the new position, probationary termination, confirmation of pay rate, and any other pertinent information associated with the appointment to the position. Once this review has been completed and all paperwork determined to be complete and in order, the appointment to the position may take place.

Once a final offer has been made and accepted, candidate results letters and panel member thank-you's should be issued as soon after the final selection is approved as possible. Samples of each are included in the following pages.

SAMPLE NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS TO CANDIDATE SELECTED

Date

Candidate's Name
Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear _____:

Congratulations! This letter confirms your acceptance of the position of _____
_____ with the City of Columbus, Ohio, Department of
_____.

As we discussed, you are to report to work at _____ location at
_____ a.m. on _____. You will be
scheduled to attend a new employee orientation session provided by the City's
Human Resources Department.

If you have any questions, please contact _____ (name)
in our payroll section at _____ (number) or you can reach me
at _____ (number).

Congratulations on being selected for this position. We look forward to working
with you.

Sincerely,

(Your name)

(Title)

SAMPLE VERBAL NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS TO CANDIDATE

NOT SELECTED

This is _____.
(your name and department)

I am calling to inform you that, late last week, an offer of employment was made to and accepted by one of the individuals who, like you, had expressed interest in the (classification title) position.

All the members of the interview panel and I want to thank you for interviewing with us. We are very appreciative of the time you took to discuss with us your work experience, training and desire for a new work experience.

Again, thank you for your interest and we wish you the best as you seek new employment.

SAMPLE WRITTEN NOTIFICAITON OF RESULTS TO CANDIDATE

NOT SELECTED

Date

Candidate's Name
Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear _____:

Thank you for your recent interest in an available (classification title) position with the (department/division name). Late last week an offer of employment was made to and accepted by one of the individuals who, like you, had expressed interest in the position.

All the members of the interview panel and I want to thank you for interviewing with us. We are very appreciative of the time you took to discuss with us your work experience, training and desire for a new work experience.

Again, thank you for your interest and we wish you the best as you seek new employment.

Sincerely,

(Your name)
(Title)

SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER TO PANEL MEMBERS

Date

Panel Member's Name

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear _____:

I want to thank you on behalf of the City of Columbus and the (department) for your participation on the interview panel for the (class) position.

You were an important part of the panel and did an excellent job interviewing the candidates. From the panel's top recommendations, (person selected) was offered the position. He/she has accepted the job offer and will be coming on board (date). We are very excited, and we think (name) will do an excellent job.

Your time and participation were very much appreciated. Thank you again for your input in a successful selection. We appreciate the time you gave us and we hope that we may be able to call on your assistance in the future.

Sincerely,

(Your name)

(Title)

DOCUMENTATION

Good documentation is vital to a good selection process. Panel members should take notes to remind them of the candidate's responses, and to help in developing their final selection recommendations. In addition to the panel members' notes, basic documentation regarding the entire selection process for the particular vacancy should be compiled and archived to serve as protection should a complaint or lawsuit develop regarding the hiring process. This documentation should be retained until the process has been completed with no complaints filed, and should include:

- Job title
- Interviewer panel names and titles
- Names of candidates
- Date and time of interviews
- A copy of the standard questions asked
- Panel notes
- Reference notes
- Notes of job offers made and disposition

9

This section of the guide provides you with current copies of the forms listed below and referenced earlier in the guide. These forms can also be accessed and filled-out on the Civil Service Commission's website: www.csc.columbus.gov.

- Position Request Form
- Recruitment Request Form
- Pre-Employment Drug Screen Form



Columbus Civil Service Commission
50 West Gay Street, Room 600
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Position Request

Department: _____ Division: _____

This request is to:

- ☐ **FILL** a position.
- ☐ **UPDATE** position duties.

What will be the major responsibility of this position? _____

List the primary duties the position will perform and the associated percentage of time performing the duty:

% Duty Description:

What is the name and classification of the immediate supervisor of this position?: _____

What is the name and classification of the second level supervisor?: _____

What is the number of employees supervised by this position?: _____

What are the names or position numbers and classification titles of the employee(s) to be supervised by this position?: _____

What, if any, license/certification is required/preferred to perform the duties of this position?: _____

Is this license/certification required by the class specification? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What equipment will be regularly **OPERATED**, **MAINTAINED**, and/or **REPAIRED** by this position?: _____

What software will be regularly used by this position?: _____

I certify that the information contained above is an accurate statement of the major duties and responsibilities of this position. This certification is made with the knowledge that this information will be used to determine the appropriate classification and pay for the position and any false or misleading statements may constitute a violation of City Code.

Originator's Signature

Date

Extension

Please forward this notification to your department/divisional human resources representative for processing.

Position Justification Information

1.

Why is this creation/reallocation needed?

2.

How will the position be funded?

3.

Comments:

To Be Completed By Department/Division Human Resources Office

This request is to:

- ☐ **UPDATE** the duties of an existing vacant (or soon to be vacant) position and **FILL** it;
- ☐ **REALLOCATE** the class assigned to an existing vacant (or soon to be vacant) position and **FILL** it;
- ☐ **CREATE** a new position and **FILL** it;
- ☐ **REALLOCATE** the class assigned to an existing filled position;
- ☐ **UPDATE** the duties of an existing filled position.

CSC Review

- ☐ Approved
- ☐ Denied
- ☐ _____
- By: _____

Position(s) Type: ☐ FT ☐ PT / ☐ R ☐ L ☐ S - **Shift:** ☐ 1st ☐ 2nd ☐ 3rd ☐ R **Location:** _____

Is this a *Temporary* position? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Department No.: _____ **Division No.:** _____

Position Number(s): _____

Suggested Class Code: _____ **Class Title:** _____

Human Resources Approval

Date

Appointing Authority Approval

Date:



Columbus Civil Service Commission
50 West Gay Street, Room 600
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Recruitment Request

Date Notification Prepared: _____ Contact Name/#: _____

Department: _____ Division: _____

Class Code _____ Class Title: _____

EPC Number(s): _____ Position(s) Type: ☐ FT ☐ PT / ☐ R ☐ L ☐ S - Shift: ☐ 1st ☐ 2nd ☐ 3rd

Complete this section **ONLY** if a current employee from your department has been identified to fill this noncompetitive or provisional vacancy, and no CSC posting is being requested. A completed application must be submitted with this notification, and approved by the Civil Service Commission **BEFORE** an offer of employment can be made to the identified candidate.

1. Employee Name: _____

2. Social Security Number: _____

3. Current Classification: _____

Please select one of the following:

☐ **Please ADMINISTER an AT VACANCY exam for this position and issue a certification list:**

1. ☐ Open Competitive ☐ Promotional ☐ Rule VI (Name/SSN): _____

(forward completed application with this request form)

2. Reason for test: MQ's ☐ Approved ☐ Rejected by: _____

☐ Eligible list has fewer than 5 names available ☐ List due to expire ☐ Other: _____

3. ☐ Special information to include in posting: _____

☐ **Please POST this position:**

1. Opening Date: _____ Closing Date: _____

3. Individual to receive ARF's: _____ Phone: (614) 645 - _____

4. Mailing Address: _____

5. Special information to be included in the Vacancy Notification: _____

☐ **Please ISSUE a competitive/qualifying noncompetitive certification list.**

Comments: _____

Contact: _____ Phone: (614) 645 - _____

☐ **Please REVIEW the attached () application(s) and issue a noncompetitive certification list or provisional hiring approval.**

Authorizing Signature

Date

Extension



Selection Process Summary

Interview Panel Members:

<u>Panel #1</u>		<u>Panel #2</u>	
Name:	Classification:	Name:	Classification:

Candidate Summary:

Final Candidate:	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
Last Name:					
First Name:					
1 st Interview Date:					
2 nd Interview Date:					
Current Position Title:					
Current Employer:					
Current Pay Rate:					
BICF info rec'd. from CSC?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Overall Reference Rating:	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Verified only	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Verified only	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Verified only	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Verified only	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Verified only
Overall rating by Panel #1:	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
Overall rating by Panel #2:	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
Relatives?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Authorizing Signature					

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE TO BE COMPLETED FOLLOWING THE APPOINTING

Conditional Offer Date:					
Drug Screen Date:					
Drug Screen OK?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
CSC Interview Date:					
Appointment Effective Date:					
Starting Pay Rate:					

Comments Regarding Candidate:

Candidate 1: _____

Candidate 2: _____

Candidate 3: _____

Candidate 4: _____

Candidate 5: _____



City of Columbus
Department of Human Resources
90 West Broad Street, Room 311
Columbus, Ohio 43215

WorkHealth Pre-Employment Test Form

Applicant/Employee Name: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Classification Title: _____

Position Number: _____ Appointment Date: _____

Is this position funded by the General Fund? ☐ Yes ☐ No

*Checking the "yes" box indicates position is funded by the General Fund; "no" indicated position is funded with self-sustaining or enterprise funds.
Completion of this box ensure proper billing*

Employer Name: **City of Columbus**

Department: _____

Division: _____

Contact Name: _____

Contact Phone Number: **(614) 645-** _____

Designated Employer Representative: **Winfield T. Sapp, MA, CCDC III-E**
PH: (614) 645-4083 FX: (614) 645-5940

Collection Site Locations: (DONOR MUST BRING PHOTO ID TO COLLECTION SITE)

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | WorkHealth-North, 6200 Cleveland Avenue | PH: (614) 566-0575 | FX: (614) 566-8893 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | WorkHealth-Downtown, 223 E. Town Street, 2 nd Floor | PH: (614) 566-9191 | FX: (614) 566-8893 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | WorkHealth-Southwest, 2030 Stringtown Road | PH: (614) 544-0030 | FX: (614) 566-8893 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | WorkHealth-West, 4872 Cemetery Road | PH: (614) 777-4077 | FX: (614) 566-8893 |

Please indicate the type of testing requested:

- ☐ DOT Pre-employment Drug Screen (**SPLIT SPECIMEN**)
- ☐ Non-DOT Pre-employment Drug Screen (**SINGLE SPECIMEN**)